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## STATEMENT FROM PRESIDENT RICARDO MARTINELLI ABOUT PANAMA-U.S. FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

"The trade agreement between the U.S. and Panama confirms the fundamental partnership between our two countries.

"By sending the U.S.-Panama free trade agreement to Congress today, the President has taken a crucial step toward creating new economic opportunities for the citizens of both Panama and the United States. With Congressional leaders committed to swift action on this important treaty, we take another step forward together in fortifying a great and historic friendship between Americans and Panamanians.

"Our long partnership is founded on common values and common interests. Ours is a mutual commitment to providing a better life for our citizens which will create jobs in both countries; provide continued opportunities for economic growth; and greater stability in the region, through trade ties and a rising standard of living.

"I look forward to continuing to work with America's Congressional and business leaders in cementing our great and historic friendship."

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